

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION**

**MAR 11 2003**

**UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS  
FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT**

**CATHY A. CATTERSON  
U.S. COURT OF APPEALS**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,	)	No. 01-50369
	)	
Plaintiff-Appellee,	)	D.C. No. CR 98-01208-CM-2
	)	
v.	)	MEMORANDUM*
	)	
ISRAEL MENDOZA-VALENCIA, aka	)	
Rafael Ruelas, aka Rafa, aka Seak B,	)	
	)	
Defendant-Appellant.	)	
_____	)	

Appeal from the United States District Court for the  
Central District of California  
Carlos R. Moreno, District Judge, Presiding

Argued and Submitted February 6, 2003  
Pasadena, California

Before: PREGERSON, REINHARDT, and ARCHER,\*\* Circuit Judges.

Appellant Mendoza-Valencia was convicted of violating 21 U.S.C. § 846.  
Mendoza-Valencia now challenges the district court's finding of guilt, arguing  
that the evidence was not sufficient to support his conviction.

---

\*This disposition is not appropriate for publication and may not be cited in  
or by the courts of this circuit except as may be provided by NINTH CIRCUIT RULE  
36-3.

\*\*The Honorable Glenn L. Archer, Jr., Senior Circuit Judge, United States  
Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, sitting by designation.

We have reviewed Mendoza-Valencia's claim of insufficient evidence, and we find that this claim does not merit relief.

To support a conviction for conspiracy under 21 U.S.C. § 846, the government must prove that (1) there was an agreement to commit the underlying substantive offense, and (2) that the defendant had the requisite intent to commit that offense. United States v. Mesa-Farias, 53 F.3d 258, 260 (9th Cir. 1995). The government must show that the defendant knowingly participated in the charged conspiracy. United States v. Murray, 751 F.2d 1528, 1534 (9th Cir. 1985). However, the government only needs to establish a "slight connection" between the defendant and the conspiracy to prove the defendant knowingly participated. United States v. Hubbard, 96 F.3d 1223, 1226 (9th Cir. 1996).

The evidence presented at trial supports Appellant's conviction under this standard.

**AFFIRMED.**